



## Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

### INDOOR AIR QUALITY TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS UPDATE

#### News & Events

- **Upcoming Webinar! *The IAQ Tools for Schools Framework and Connector: Engaging Leaders for Enduring Program Success*. Thursday, January 22, 2009, 2:00pm ET.** Building on the momentum from the recent *IAQ Tools for Schools* Symposium, this [Webinar](#) will bring together national IAQ experts and school leaders to discuss effective IAQ management strategies. Learn how the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Framework can help you develop, enhance, and sustain healthy learning environments in your school district. In addition, you will hear about opportunities to interact with your peers through the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Connector. [Register today!](#)
- **Is asthma a concern in your school?** If so, check out EPA's *Communities in Action for Asthma Friendly Environments* Webinar Series to learn what some of the most effective asthma programs in the country are doing to improve asthma outcomes in their communities. Visit [www.asthmacommunitynetwork.org/webinars](http://www.asthmacommunitynetwork.org/webinars) for more information.

#### Keep your schools healthy and clean this holiday season—go GREEN!

As the weather grows colder this winter season, people will be spending more time indoors. Holiday gatherings with family and friends and other indoor activities require a task that nearly all of us dread: cleaning. People bring in more than just cold air when they come indoors; they bring in dirt, dander, pollutants, and germs. It's especially important at this time of year when buildings are sealed tight to keep us warm to clean thoroughly and smartly. **And, cleaning smart means cleaning green.** Green cleaning is especially important in schools. Given the high density of people in one area, it is essential that the chosen cleaning methods account for the effect of the chemicals on student and staff health and IAQ. Chemicals in cleaning agents may trigger asthma attacks, cause headaches and nausea, and lead to other health concerns. Moreover, children are prone to illness during these colder months, and considering that their immune systems are still developing, it is essential that cleaning methods help make the indoor environment more healthy, not less healthy.

What can you and your school do to help keep children healthy this holiday season? Begin by considering the vendor reliability, price, and performance of green cleaning products. Use the resources below to help you go green at school.

#### Resources

- For an overview of green cleaning and additional tips, visit the [Quick and Easy Guide to Green Cleaning in Schools](#). Developed by the Healthy Schools Campaign, this is an award-winning guide to developing and implementing a green cleaning program and is available free of charge to schools and non-profit organizations.
- The [Cleaning for Healthy Schools Toolkit](#), developed by the National Collaborative Work Group on Green Cleaning and Chemical Policy Reform in Schools, is a train-the-trainer program you can use to build awareness, knowledge, and commitment to adopting best practices for green cleaning in schools and child care centers.
- The Healthy Schools Network, developed a [Guide to Green Cleaning](#) as a tool for teachers,

administrators, facility managers, and green champions who are dedicated to improving IAQ. The guide includes a general overview of green cleaning, a purchasing checklist, as well as other information for purchasers to consider.

- For more information on reducing chemicals in schools, check out EPA's [Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign \(SC3\)](#) for valuable information and tools to help you develop a successful chemical management program in your school.

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## Cold Weather Checklist

Ensure that you are doing everything you can to improve IAQ in your school and students' homes this holiday season by keeping the following considerations in mind.

- ☐ **[Monitor bus idling](#) outside of schools.** Bus drivers may let their buses' engines idle in order to keep the bus warm for occupants, but doing so can mean that the engines' harmful fumes are entering into the building via ventilation ducts and other routes, affecting the IAQ. Not to mention the effects of the fumes on people, especially children, gathering around buses outside before and after school.
- ☐ **[Control pet dander](#).** In cooler weather, families have a tendency to allow pets to stay inside. While this may make your pet happy, it may not be the best move for the health of your children or their classmates. Since pet dander is an [asthma trigger](#), if it becomes trapped in one student's clothes and is transported to the school, it could put other children at risk for asthma attacks.
- ☐ **[Be fire smart](#).** Some families use wood burning fireplaces during the winter season. While fireplaces add ambiance and warmth to any room, the woodsmoke can degrade IAQ and trigger allergy and asthma attacks. For practical tips on proper wood burning techniques, visit the EPA's [Wood Burning Efficiency and Safety](#) page.
- ☐ **[Use the checklists](#)** in the [IAQ TrS Action Kit](#) for more tips and tailor them for seasonal considerations.

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## How much do you know about HealthySEAT Version 2.0?

Is your school district having trouble managing and tracking all of the important environmental, health, and safety issues schools face? Do you want to improve your school district's ability to maximize its facility management resources? If you answered yes to these questions, download [HealthySEAT](#) (School Environments Assessment Tool) Version 2.0 today. HealthySEAT helps school districts evaluate and manage their school facilities for key environmental, safety, and health issues.

HealthySEAT is designed to be customized and used by district-level staff to conduct completely voluntary self-assessments of their school (and other) facilities. New features include an unlimited number of enhanced custom notification letters, improved reporting capabilities, and many other resources. The software can also be used to generate specific data that will aid building/grounds and facility managers in economizing resources and making compelling cases for renovation, repair, and maintenance dollars. With today's volatile economy and sinking state educational budgets, shouldn't you give your students a [HealthySEAT](#)?

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## Tell Us What You Think

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ TrS* Update? Need more information or have a quick

question? Send us an e-mail at [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

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## Contact Us or Subscribe

If you would like more information about any of the topics discussed in this Update or would like to subscribe to EPA's *IAQ TfS* Updates, please send an e-mail to [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com). If you are subscribing, please include the following in the subject line: subscribe to EPA's *IAQ TfS* Updates.

The *IAQ TfS* Program is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ TfS* Program at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools).

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